

resounding dreams

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resounding dreams

by [Drhair76](#)

Summary

Tommy's eyes flit over to him. Techno expects him to wave, to drift over, to let relief wash over his expression- seeing them as his respite from anything else he has to face. But no, that doesn't happen. Tommy casts his eyes over the lot of them and there isn't a single moment of recognition. No light, no relief. He looks even further confused, actually, with the way that his brow furrows.

"Tommy?" Techno says again, but Tommy turns forward, continuing his walk like they mean nothing to him. Like Techno means nothing to him.

or, Techno has a nightmare.

Notes

I want to start posting little one-shots in the ice universe because these guys really are just hanging out :(

It's probably the worst dream that Techno has had in a long time.

It starts out normal enough. Wilbur is there, smiling, which is good, and George is off to the side, quiet but content. Techno can't see the rest of the team, his mind's eye isn't focused on them, but he knows that they're there. He knows, asleep, sick, hurt, what they feel like. That's Sapnap's familiar warmth behind him and that's Schlatt's loudness. They fill up the space that's there, even in the dreamscape.

They're all at the Olympics, in the cafeteria having breakfast. Techno, even in the dream, can tell they're about to go compete because the air feels electric, like every single one of them is just a moment away from jumping out of their seats.

"Good win coming," George informs them, sipping his blue powerade. "I can tell."

"You think so?" Wilbur asks, and Techno takes note of the way he doesn't seem at all tight. Even in Techno's dreams, Wilbur is the most loose and happy he can be. "I heard that they're crafty."

"That's what people always say," Sapnap's voice, off to the left, says. "And then we crush them. The crafty ones are no match for us."

Techno hums, a vague agreement. His job as team captain is to manage their spirits- especially right before a match. If they're too overconfident, they'll go and bomb, if they're not confident enough, they'll get run over. Sapnap very well may be right, but if Techno is too enthusiastic, then they'll take it as fact and go out onto the ice and underperform.

"Shut up," George says, the perfect enforcer. Techno chuckles.

Then, the doors to the cafeteria open.

There are three ways out of the room- one way leads to the stairs to the women's commons, one way leads to the stairs to the men's commons, and the other takes you directly to practice arenas. There are only two ice rinks for all of them to practice on, but since competitions start today, they *should* be empty.

Should.

Tommy comes through the practice arena doors and Techno will never forget the way that he looks. He's put together- his hair is tousled just so, perfect so that his whole face is visible, and his outfit- a form-fitting blue sweater and iron pressed black pants, with his skates over one shoulder. If Techno was anyone else, he'd think nothing of this, but he's *not* anyone else. He knows Tommy.

He *knows* Tommy.

He can see his eyes, even from where he's sitting, the dullness in them, the exhaustion falling from his figure. He has to perform today, Techno knows that just from looking at him, but

he's *already* drained. He's already flagging and the day's just begun- can't his coach see what he's doing to the kid?

"Techno," George murmurs, his eyes fixed on Tommy.

"I know," Techno says softly. Then, louder, "Hey! Tommy!"

Tommy's eyes flit over to him. Techno expects him to wave, to drift over, to let relief wash over his expression- seeing them as his respite from anything else he has to face. But no, that doesn't happen. Tommy casts his eyes over the lot of them and there isn't a single moment of recognition. No light, no relief. He looks even further confused, actually, with the way that his brow furrows.

"Tommy?" Techno says again, but Tommy turns forward, continuing his walk like they mean nothing to him. Like *Techno* means nothing to him.

Wilbur turns around in his chair and Techno can't see his face, but he can just *tell* that he lights up at the sight of Tommy going by. He raises an arm, waves- "Tommy!"

But Wilbur's voice does nothing for Tommy- not as if he's purposefully ignoring the man, but as if he doesn't recognize who is calling to him. As if Tommy doesn't associate that voice with warm golden mornings, with fluffy bread dusted with cinnamon and glazed with sugar, with careful, gentle steady hands reaching out to hold.

Techno knows better than anyone- except maybe the two of them- that there is a likeness. They're two pools facing one another, reflecting the same wavering image. They've both been through the same nightmare and have come out holding hands by the end, safe together.

Techno knows that Tommy is indescribably important to Wilbur, and so when Tommy keeps walking like Wilbur is nothing, the man turns back, his eyes wide and already wet. His first instinct in distress is to look for Techno, *to* Techno, to fix it, but Techno feels vastly out of his league.

"Wil-"

"Tech, what happened- what's-" Wilbur starts, then stops. He swallows, but it does nothing for the shine in his brown eyes.

"I don't know-" Technoblade stands up, pushes his plate away. "Let me go check."

He stands up, but the second he moves to take a step, to chase Tommy through those doors, the scene changes. The cafeteria around him fades into darkness, and the ice arena melts into view. He's startled for a moment, but then his vision focuses on the ice in front of him.

Tommy is there, so of course he's got all of Techno's attention.

Gone is the exhaustion from earlier, the deadened look. Now there are cameras, now there's a crowd. Now, he's got to perform. It's almost the exact same scene as Tommy's real final performance- the one they helped him prepare for, the one they watched him learn from scratch. But instead of the bright, excited, nervous smile he had before, now he just looks

blank. He looks almost resigned, like he knows now this will go- how it should go- and he's just playing his part to get there.

"He looks tired, doesn't he?" says a voice off to his left- when Techno turns, he sees a woman dressed in a cream-colored sweater, with curly light brown hair clipped to the side. Puffy, one of the announcers for the olympic figure skating, who Techno only recognizes from the videos of her old skates that Tommy's shown him. She's older now, and more distinguished, but her eyes are wise.

"Tommy?" Techno asks, even though he knows exactly who she's talking about. The only kid in the middle of the rink just standing there, waiting for his cue to move. Waiting for his cue to work. Waiting for his cue to *breathe*.

"Yeah. Tommy. Wonder-kid." She sighs. "I commentate on him just like all the others but I can't help the way I'm easy on him. I feel like he hears enough hurt off the air."

Techno looks over. He sees Tommy's coach by the edge of the rink. The man's got his arms crossed over his chest, watching in judgment before the routine's even started.

"You can tell."

Puffy sighs. "I've been in the skating world a long time. It's a nasty business. Skaters are treated like bodies. Like winning is the only thing they're made for. And everyone wants something."

"What do you want?" Techno asks.

Puffy looks at him. He can tell she's thinking *smart kid*. "I want to be able to do my job without feeling like I'm narrating a car crash."

"But you didn't say anything." He says. Anger stirs in his gut. It's something he hasn't been able to stop thinking about since he met Tommy. Since they *helped* Tommy. How many people before them could've stepped in? How long was Tommy suffering when people were just too afraid to speak up and stop it? "You knew and you never said."

"I had my reasons," she says, and it's vague enough that Techno suddenly remembers that this is a dream. She can only tell him what he already knows and he's never talked to Puffy so- "But you- you know him. You can help him."

"We *have* helped him."

"Have you?"

And then, the music starts.

Tommy moves like a wave- all long, graceful, beautiful, flowing movements. As if he's leaving parts of himself in places and desperately reaching for others. He moves the way the word *longing* feels- graceful and reaching, holding on and waiting. *Begging*.

When he jumps, he lands like he weighs nothing, and the crowd all burst into cheers. Techno doesn't hear them. All he can see is the tightness of Tommy's expression. He doesn't smile, he isn't proud. Techno can tell that he's already judging himself by his coach's impossible standards. He keeps moving though, and Techno, embarrassingly, finds himself caught up. In the music, in the movement, in the art that Tommy creates.

He gets so into it that he only comes back to himself when Tommy spins on the ice and holds a pose, the music finally finishing.

"You got caught up, didn't you?" Puffy asks. Techno, not looking away from the picture of Tommy bending over on the ice, anguished and relieved and terrified all in one, nods. "Yeah. You ask why no one has spoken up? Why it's so hard for people to see and say? That's because Tommy is a movement. No one can bear to be the one to try stopping it."

"He's exhausted."

"He's magnificent." She counters. And Technoblade has to nod.

Tommy straightens up and gone is all the emotion from earlier- felt just for half of a second in his moment of weakness. He spins and holds his hands out, nodding to the crowds that are cheering for him, posing for the announcers that are calling his name. And then he skates over to the gate, avoiding all the little teddy bears thrown onto the ice for him.

The coach isn't smiling. He's waiting though, and holding out blade covers. When Tommy steps off the ice, he takes them silently and hesitates for just a moment. His coach puts a solid hand on the boy's shoulder, then walks away. Tommy shudders.

Then, when Tommy's gotten himself together, he follows.

"We did help him," Techno repeats, desperate. "We did."

Puffy doesn't respond, but they both watch the way Tommy follows after his coach, ghostly.

And then Techno wakes up.

It takes his brain a second to catch up and process what his eyes are seeing- his hotel ceiling, in the dark. There's no ice, no arena, no cafeteria. There's no Puffy, or Tommy, or glossy eyed Wilbur. Just Technoblade in the dark in his hotel room.

He sits up and groans to himself. He looks across the room at the other bed. The window shade is up just enough for Techno to see tufts of curly brown hair poking out from under the covers. Wilbur, sleeping soundly, not plagued with the same nightmare that Techno was.

Good.

Techno can't go back to sleep, though. Not unless he wants to see the image of Tommy following slowly behind his coach. Not unless he wants to see Tommy's poised limbs with that slight tremble of fatigue. He stays up, and just waits.

They're not at the Olympics, nor are they at a tournament, so there's no set time that they need to be up, and Techno isn't going to wake Wilbur up when he's asleep. Wilbur used to have trouble with that- sleeping. Sometimes he still does, so Techno just waits patiently, letting him get as many hours as he can.

Eventually, Wilbur shifts, groans, and yawns. "Tech?" He goes, turning over and peeking at Techno before pulling the cover over his head. "Of course you're already up," he complains, "you freak of nature."

"Actually, I couldn't sleep."

This catches Wilbur's attention. He sits up, revealing his face once more- his *concerned* face. "Couldn't sleep? What happened?"

Techno sighs. "It was just a dream," he dismisses. "No need to get worried."

But telling Wilbur not to worry when he's already worried is like trying to tell water to hold still – it just won't happen. His frown deepens and then, spontaneously, he yanks back the covers, stands and opens his arms. Techno blinks at him.

"Hugs always make me feel better," he says, cheeks red but resolute. "So you should have a hug."

Techno softens.

This is Wilbur, real and honest. Climbing over his own shame to give every part of himself. It burns Techno up inside, the thought that there were people who had this, had such a deeply loving person, and decided to simply hurt him.

There are too many people who don't know good when they see it. Even more still who know it and decide to hurt it.

Techno takes the hug, letting Wilbur press close and hum happily and squeeze him firmly. "Everything is okay," Wilbur says. "Every *one* is okay."

Techno wonders whether Wilbur knows how much and how constantly he worries. Over them all, over the things that creep, over the things that he'll never be able to control. He wonders how obvious it is that sometimes he's kept awake because of it all.

"Thank you," he says, letting Wilbur go. "I do feel better now. Just don't tell Schlatt that – he'd never let me hear the end of it."

Wilbur mimes locking his lips with a smile. "What was the dream about?"

Techno hides a wince. Wilbur doesn't need to imagine what Techno's seen – he doesn't need to picture Tommy walking through them all and towards pain. He doesn't need to imagine what would have happened if Tommy never met them.

"Nothing." Techno smiles a little. "We lost a match. Sapnap wouldn't stop complaining."

Wilbur rubs his eyes. "Sapnap would never let that happen."

"That's why it's just a nightmare, Wil," he says. "Because it would never happen. Now come on, let's get ready."

When they go down to breakfast, Phil is already there. He's sitting at a table, which is really four tables pushed together because he's been traveling with them long enough to know that they don't sit on their own. He's got a flimsy paper cup of hotel coffee in front of him and an apple.

"Morning boys," he greets, blowing on the steaming cup. "How'd you sleep?"

"Well," Wilbur slides into the seat across from Phil. "Thank you. Is that coffee?"

"The coffee ban is still up," Phil says quickly, tugging his cup away from Wilbur's sneaking hands. "Quackity ruined that for all of you." His eyes go back to Techno. "Tech?"

"Are we the first ones up?" Techno asks, artfully avoiding the question. Well, not as artfully as he thinks, because Phil's eyebrow raises.

"No," Phil starts. He doesn't have to finish though, because Tommy comes around the corner with a blueberry bagel on his plate.

Techno didn't realize it, but since waking up it felt like there was someone sitting on his chest. Now, seeing Tommy, looking pleasantly sleepy and dressed in a t-shirt that one of them bought him, allows Techno to finally breathe.

"Tommy," he says. He can't find anything else to add.

"Good morning Techno," Tommy greets, eyes grinning. "They have blueberry bagels."

He huffs a laugh. "I see that, kid. Come here?" Tommy comes easily, shuffling in under Techno's arm. It's such a stark difference to the dream that it easily does the trick in soothing him. "You okay?"

Tommy hums, mouth already full of his toasted blueberry bagel with cream cheese. Techno gets the feeling that he's hindering Tommy from breakfast.

"Go eat," Techno snorts, giving him a gentle shove. Tommy's smile widens around the bread. He sits down at Phil's side, and Techno decides to ignore the way that both him and Wilbur are watching him – curious and questioning. They worry too much.

He *also* decides to ignore how hypocritical that thought might be.

Techno gets a bagel, just to match with Tommy, and he feels himself relax more and more as his team clamber down from their rooms. Schlatt is being basically *dragged* by George, still half sleeping, and Quackity is immediately making a beeline for the glazed pastries. Sapnap manages to somehow make the world's most fucked up waffle and *then* he drowns them in syrup to further ruin it.

"You are insane," George remarks, staring at the plate of sugar. He would, to, as he only got yogurt and some granola. "That is going to grow legs and kill you."

Sapnap sticks his tongue out. Real mature. "Tommy thinks it's neat, don't you Tommy?"

Tommy blinks. "Um."

"That's a *no* in Tommy-speak," Schlatt says proudly. "You've been shut down, Sapnap."

"It could be worse?" Tommy tries. "At least he didn't try to put nuts and chocolate sauce on top of it?"

Sapnap's jaw slackens. "There's *chocolate sauce*?" He stands abruptly. "Boys, I'll be right back. There is ...something urgent needing my attention."

"And it involves your plate of terrible waffles," George says blankly.

"And it involves my plate of terrible waffles," Sapnap nods, holding the plate close to his chest and going back into the communal kitchen.

"He's going to come back with the world's most teeth-rotting sweet covered waffle." George informs them all. "For the rest of the day, he will be terrible to deal with. This is just like Quackity and the coffee, only *worse*."

Quackity, who had been eating his eggs in peace, gasps. "Hey!" He stabs at the scramble with his fork. "I am *very* nice when I drink coffee. Speaking of – Phil, can I –"

"No," Phil says immediately.

Quackity pouts.

"Sapnap might ask us to try his waffle," Wilbur says, entirely too amused at the thought. "He's going to think that he made a masterpiece."

"My omelet is a masterpiece," Schlatt huffs. "Whatever he's doing is a *horror* show."

Across from him, Tommy gently brushes his foot against Techno's calf, getting his attention. He's finished his bagel, and is sipping water slowly. "Here," he says, holding out the rest of his unused cream cheese. "For you."

"Thanks," Techno takes it. He pauses, then, "I love you, Tommy."

Tommy's eyes widen. They tell him this a lot, and still, every time he hears it, he acts like it's the first time that he's ever been told. His cheeks go pink, but his expression softens, and he nudges Techno's foot again. "I love you too, Techno. Are you sure you're okay?"

Techno nods, knowing that he means it. "Yeah. As long as you are."

Tommy's grin widens. "Then you must be *really* okay. And happy. I'm happy."

"Tommy," Techno sighs, relieved, "you don't know how much it means to hear you say that."

Tommy ducks his head, nudges his calf again, and they continue eating breakfast, with Techno's heart a million times lighter.

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